Mitchell Rejoins Firm He Headed Before '68

By Sanford J. Ungar
Washington Post Staff Writer

John N. Mitchell, who was Attorney General until March 1, has rejoined the New York law firm in which he and President Nixon were partners before the 1968 election.

Sources close to the law firm said yesterday that Mitchell will draw a salary from it—although not that of a full senior partner—while he is heading Mr. Nixon's campaign for re-election this year.

His name will not be put back into the name of the firm, however. It will continue to be known as Mudge Rose Guthrie & Alexander.

Mitchell's return to the law firm, where he specialized for years in the issuance of municipal bonds, was announced on engraved cards sent from its New York office in the last few weeks.

The cards, dated March 1, read as follows:

"We are pleased to announce that John N. Mitchell having resigned as Attorney General of the United States has rejoined our firm. Mudge Rose Guthrie & Alexander 20 Broad Street, New York; 1701 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington; 12, Rue de la Paix, Paris."

The former Attorney General still has not been named officially to direct the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

When he testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee on March 15, during the extended hearings on the nomination of Richard G. Kleindienst as his successor, Mitchell complained, "I never wake up in the morning that I don't read that I'm the campaign director."

"I haven't made application" for the job, Mitchell told the senators. He insisted that Francis L. Dale, publisher of the Cincinnati Enquirer and president of the Cincinnati Reds baseball team, was still in charge of the President's campaign.

In a conversation with reporters during a break in the Kleindienst hearings that day, Mitchell said he was "unemployed. If these hearings go on much longer, I'll have to ask for witness fees."

A spokesman for the re-election committee said yesterday, however, that there was no doubt Mitchell would be director of the campaign.

"It's just a matter of when he takes over," the spokesman said.

Mitchell could not be reached for comment on his election year plans yesterday, because he is on vacation at an undisclosed location in Florida. "He wanted to take some time off before plunging in," the spokesman explained.

Meanwhile, at 1701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, furniture was being moved into Mitchell's future fourth-floor office, and his secretary was taking calls there rather than in his office at the law firm down the hall.

The spokesman confirmed that Mitchell's wife, Martha, also has an office in the headquarters of the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

"She is a very good spokesman for the President," he said, predicting that Mrs. Mitchell would take an active role in Mr. Nixon's campaign.

The spokesman said, however, that he does not know what salary each of the Mitchells will collect from the campaign committee, "if any."

In a telephone interview from New York, the senior partner in the law firm, Randolph Guthrie, declined to say why Mitchell's name had not been put back into the name of the firm or what the former Attorney General's salary will be.

"I don't think the firm ought to be discussing this in the press," Guthrie said. He added, "I don't get involved in politics with Mr. Mitchell."

Mitchell's salary at the law firm before he became Attorney General has been esti-

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20 BROAD STREET, NEW YORK

1701 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W., WASHINGTON

12, RUE DE LA PAIX, PARIS

The announcement of Mitchell's return to law firm.

mated at $200,000 a year and President Nixon's at $150,000 annually. Both were paid until they took office on January 20, 1969.

Among the firm's biggest clients at the time were Pepsi Cola, Warner-Lambert Pharmaceutical Co., General Cigar Co., El Paso Natural Gas Co. and Eversharp-Shick, Inc.

Mudge Rose Guthrie & Alexander also represented, and has continued to represent, Continental Baking, a subsidiary of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corp.

It was because of this connection that Mitchell disqualified himself from participation in three Justice Department antitrust suits against ITT and Kleindienst instead supervised them as deputy attorney general.

Kleindienst's confirmation as Attorney General has been delayed indefinitely by the Senate Judiciary Committee's investigation of whether settlement of those antitrust cases was connected with ITT's pledge of at least $200,000 to help bring this year's Republican National Convention to San Diego.

It is generally believed that Mitchell will not return to the Justice Department if President Nixon is re-elected, and that the attorney generalship will be left to Kleindienst, if he is confirmed.

The absence of Mitchell's name from the law firm's title, however, may be an indication that he hopes to return to government in another position.